

Film Review – ‘Sikaar’: No logic, no problem

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Zubeen Garg in Sikaar

The much-anticipated Assamese film *Sikaar*, under the banners of Big Film Media, Unicorn Motion Pictures Production, and DCreative LLP, promised a gripping story of love, betrayal, and revenge. With a cast, including renowned artists like Zubeen Garg, Adil Hussain, and Urmila Mahanta, fans were hopeful for a strong cinematic experience. However, despite its potential, *Sikaar* ultimately falls short on many fronts.

The narrative of *Sikaar* revolves around Shankar (Zubeen Garg), a tea garden leader who fights against exploitation. His love interest, Astami (Dhyani Mohan), becomes a victim of a smuggling plot orchestrated by a group of corrupt investors. Shankar's pursuit of justice leads him to London, where he embarks on a revenge spree with the help of allies like Arlene (Urmila Mahanta), Dosti (Siddhartha Sharma), Vivan (Antariksh Saharia). Debangkar Borgohain has edited and directed the film, with the screenplay written by Bishnujyoti Handique and Sara Bodinar. The music is composed by Zubeen Garg.

One thing that really stands out in the film is its music. Zubeen Garg's composition of *Ekadoshi Ratiya* is a near-perfect ode to the beauty of Jhumoor, effectively transporting the audience into the state of awe. The fusion version of the song might spark mixed reactions, but personally, I found it to be quite enjoyable. However, despite this song's brilliance, the song *Xaturangi*'s placement in the film feels forced, as if inserted to inject charm rather than to serve the plot.

Unfortunately, the film's dialogue and overall linguistic execution leave much to be desired. The use of the Baganiya bhasha, which should have been integral to Shankar's character, feels inconsistent and unnatural. The film avoids using puritan Assamese in favour of a more conversational tone. However, there are concerns regarding the English dialogues. Both Urmila Mahanta and Antariksh Saharia's English accents carry strong Assamese influences, which undermines the credibility of their characters as being raised in England. Siddharth Sharma found limited opportunities to showcase his comedic talent, but when he did, he delivered.

Moreover, the film leans heavily on coincidences that stretch believability. Shankar and Dosti conveniently encountering a migrant smuggler at the passport office, and their subsequent meeting with Arlene in the sprawling city of London seems far-fetched. Also, please don't ask how Arlene manages to afford that apartment in London. She just does.



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ADIL HUSSAIN

URMILA MAHANTA

ANTARIKSH SAHARIAH

SIDDHARTH SHARMA



ZUBEEN GARG

IN

SIKAAR

(ASSAMESE FEATURE FILM)

STARRING ZUBEEN GARG ONLY IN CINEMAS ADIL HUSSAIN

DHYANI MOHAN ANTARIKSH SAHARIAH URMILLA MAHANTA SIDDHARTH SHARMA PAUL O' NIEL

WRITERS BISHNUJYOTTI HANDIQUE SARA BODINAR STORY DEBANGKAR BORGHAIN MUSIC ZUBEEN GARG D.O.P RAJEEV SHRIVASTAVA JOHN W. RAGGETT

DE STUDIO & VIX DO IT CREATIVE LTD. VFX SUPERVISOR PRANAB LAHKAR HEAD OF POST PRODUCTION/DI COLOURIST YASSINE NCHOUFI C.S.I SUPERVISING PRODUCER TAMANNA ALI

EXECUTIVE PRODUCER PRANAB LAHKAR YOGESH SUDHAKARA MALLINENI PRODUCERS SAM BHATTACHARJEE MITRA BHATTACHARYA EDITED & DIRECTED BY DEBANGKAR BORGHAIN

Acting performances are a mixed bag. Zubeen Garg essentially plays a version of himself, and while that may appeal to his die-hard fans, it does little for the film's credibility. The exaggerated portrayal of his character's eccentricities, such as wearing a Trishul earring, appears excessive. Adil Hussain (Police Officer Pran), typically known for his stellar performances, appears underutilized, while Urmila Mahanta's portrayal lacks conviction, especially during the forced romantic subplot with Shankar. Arlene's growing affection for Shankar felt more like "Nightingale effect" (caregivers developing romantic feelings for their patients), rather than genuine affection. Further, Arlene's childhood narrative, intended to justify her involvement in Sankar's revenge mission, felt incredibly contrived, like trying to shove a square block into a round space with a rubber hammer.

Shankar's supposed "disguise" to kill Pollock and misguide London police is laughably ineffective, and it is worse than Superman wearing glasses to become Clark Kent. It's possible that the director aimed to recreate the nostalgic vibe of Zubeen's long-haired look from films like *Dinabandhoo* and *Mon Jai*. But it failed miserably. When Dosti introduces Shankar to Arlene as the "Zubeen Garg of tea garden", and then Shankar singing Zubeen's *Rowd*, felt like, *Bhaisahab, kuch jyada nahi ho gaya ye, matlab kuch bhi?*

The portrayal of the villain, Pollock, as a lynchpin in the human trafficking trade, is equally disappointing. It's odd to think that Pollock, who is supposedly the "kingpin" in human trafficking, doesn't even carry a firearm. Martin, like Pollock, also faced Shankar without having any weapon. *Kya gunda banega re tu.*

Sikaar also falters in its depiction of London, where the overuse of the London Bridge as a backdrop feels repetitive. One cannot help but draw parallels to *Kabhi Alvida Na Kehna*'s fixation on the Brooklyn Bridge. This overemphasis on location takes away from the story's emotional depth and becomes more of a visual gimmick. We get it guys; you are in London!

The film's depiction of the London police's inefficiency in simple matters further diminishes the narrative. The idea of a man walking through central London armed with a bow and arrow, evading the authorities, is not only far-fetched but also a glaring plot hole. The actions of the police officer Pran (Adil Hussain) in destroying evidence against Shankar is another puzzling twist that undermines the film's logic. Another particularly bizarre moment occurs when an elderly English woman gleefully accepts her car after it was used for a violent chase, completely ignoring the legal consequences that would realistically follow such an act.

The film's action sequences, particularly the CGI and green screen usage, are glaringly subpar. The car chase scenes a few times felt cartoonish, with mismatched lighting and disproportionate visuals giving away the green screen use. The fight scenes, filled with exaggerated flying hay and poorly executed effects, lack the intensity needed for a revenge saga.

In conclusion, *Sikaar* is a film that suffers from poor execution, weak character development, and an over-reliance on coincidence. Despite its star-studded cast and promising premise, it fails to deliver a cohesive and engaging narrative. The film's over-the-top elements, unrealistic plot points, and forced romantic subplot make it feel more like an exaggerated melodrama than a thoughtful revenge saga.

As a Zubeen Garg fan, one may find some solace in the music and his charismatic presence, but ultimately, *Sikaar* feels like a missed opportunity to create a meaningful and impactful Assamese film. The best way to sum it up? It's like Rachel Green's Meat Trifle – Joey might insist it's good, but the truth is, it's really, really bad.

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